

By **David Maddox**  
Political Correspondent

# Blair and Major blasted for latest bids to block Brexit

TONY Blair and Sir John Major came under fire for being “unpatriotic pessimists” after they launched a fresh offensive to stop Brexit.

Yesterday Mr Blair called on Labour to back holding a second referendum to reverse last year’s historic vote.

Meanwhile fellow former prime minister Sir John launched a fresh attack on “ultra-Brexiteers” within the Conservative Party, accusing them of seeking to force a complete break with Europe.

He said that the referendum had been won last year with “fake facts and bogus promise” and the “ultras” were now shouting down anyone who expressed an opposing view in a way that was “totally un-British”.

Both were dismissed by Richard Tice, the co-chairman of Leave Means Leave. He said: “British businesses are embracing the opportunities Brexit offers.

“Unpatriotic pessimism and obstruction from the likes of Blair and Major is potentially very damaging to the British economy. I urge

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Picture: JEFF OVERS/PA

**Tony Blair said Labour should back a second EU referendum on the Andrew Marr Show yesterday**

## Osborne 'will use editor role to bash PM'

**FEARS** have been raised that George Osborne will use his appointment as editor of the London Evening Standard to attack Brexit.

The former chancellor, who was the architect of Project Fear in the EU referendum campaign, has been described by Tory insiders as “the real leader of the opposition” to Theresa May’s government.

A minister close to Mrs May has admitted that the job “looks like a

platform for vengeance” for being sacked when she became Prime Minister.

According to party sources Mr Osborne has been organising the resistance to Brexit among Conservative backbenchers opposed to leaving the EU.

With Jeremy Corbyn’s far-Left leadership leaving Labour in chaos and unable to form an effective Opposition, Mr Osborne has filled the gap.

However his appointment has

led to a series of probes over eight alleged conflicts of interest with him remaining as the MP for Tatton in Cheshire.

Mr Osborne’s other outside earners have seen him paid £650,000 a year for advising the investment managers BlackRock four days a month and get almost £800,000 for signing up with the Washington Speakers Bureau and £120,000 for being the Kissinger Fellow for the McCain Institute think tank.

them to end their negativity and join the patriots who want to see Brexit delivered swiftly.”

Tory MP Peter Bone said: “Tony Blair is part of the European elite and is not part of the real world. The fact is that the referendum last year was a definitive moment. Both sides said it would be binding and we are now leaving the EU. Does he just want another referendum every year until he gets the result he wants?”

“Tony Blair is even out of touch with his own party and its voters. He has about as much weight in the Labour Party as Lord Heseltine has in the Conservative Party.”

Speaking on BBC One’s Andrew Marr Show Mr Blair, who has started a Remain think tank, added: “What the Labour Party should say is, ‘We believed in Remain, we still think the best thing is for Britain to be part of the European Union.

“We acknowledge the people voted against that, we acknowledge therefore the Government have a mandate to negotiate Brexit. But we are going to hold them to the test that they have set and if they do not pass that test then we are going to retain the right to represent the

people of this country should their will change, to offer them the option of staying’.”

He also claimed that his decision to open the floodgates to migrants from eastern Europe in 2004 had no effect on the Brexit vote.

Tackled on whether he knew how many people from those countries would move to Britain, Mr Blair

admitted: “No, we didn’t know the numbers.”

He then claimed the 2004 expansion of the EU with 10 new countries including Poland, Lithuania and Hungary had been a “good thing” for Britain’s security and economy.

He said: “We could have delayed for four years their ability to come here and work. We didn’t, it’s true,

the economy was in a completely different position in 2004. But I point out the majority of EU immigration came post-2008.

“One of the tragedies of Brexit is we are now in a situation where we think this enlargement of the European Union... was some sort of error. It was actually a bipartisan policy of both governments that has

## Aide denies Trump snub to Chancellor

THE White House yesterday claimed that President Donald Trump did not ignore Angela Merkel’s request for a handshake.

“I don’t think he heard the question,” said his press secretary, Sean Spicer.

TV viewers heard the German Chancellor asking the US President at their first meeting if he wanted to shake hands. He did not respond and instead stared at the ground.

The rebuff was criticised by European media following Mr Trump’s adverse comments about Germany’s stance on immigration and trade deals.

Mr Trump and Prime Minister Theresa May held hands as they walked towards their joint press conference and when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Washington DC, Mr Trump insisted the US would stand up for its ally and friend.

However, Mr Trump insisted that his meeting with Mrs Merkel went well.

He wrote on Twitter:

“Despite what you have heard from the FAKE NEWS, I had a GREAT meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.”



An awkward Trump with Merkel

done great benefits to this country overall.”

Mr Blair also failed to admit that other countries including France and Germany had a seven-year period to 2011 protecting them from the full effects of free movement from eastern Europe.

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Picture: BEN CAWTHRA/PA

## My husband puts the rubbish out while I do the cooking, says May

THERESA May’s husband Philip puts the bins out while she does the cooking, the Prime Minister reveals in a rare glimpse into her domestic life.

She has a collection of more than 100 cookery books but her husband has only “one or two recipes that he can rustle up himself,” she says. “I do the cooking because I enjoy cooking.”

Mrs May also gets the odd phone call from people who have confused her with a porn star who shares her name.

She says: “We do get calls from people who want to book me to do programmes which are perhaps not about politics.”

But in a more touching part of an interview with Sky TV journalist Sophy Ridge she talks about dealing with the tragedy of losing both her parents

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shortly after she was married in 1980. Her vicar father, Hubert Brasier, was killed in a car accident, then within months her mother, who suffered from multiple sclerosis, also died.

She said: “I have had quite a lot of letters from people, who have known me over the years and knew my family, who said how proud my parents would have been. They never saw me even become an MP.”

Mrs May also spoke about her childhood where she admitted she was generally a “goody two shoes” at school.

But she recalled that once she was expected to go to a school carol concert but instead wanted to watch the New

Zealand All Blacks play. The head insisted “that’s for boys”, but her father wrote a letter saying “he thought I had been to a sufficient number of carol concerts and should be allowed to go to the rugby”.

The trip taught her that almost anything was possible for a girl. “I don’t think I’ve ever felt that being a woman in any way gets in the way.”

She also joked that her flamboyant high heels had been an icebreaker and an inspiration, getting people interested in politics.

The interview was for Sophy Ridge’s new book *The Women Who Shaped Politics*.

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